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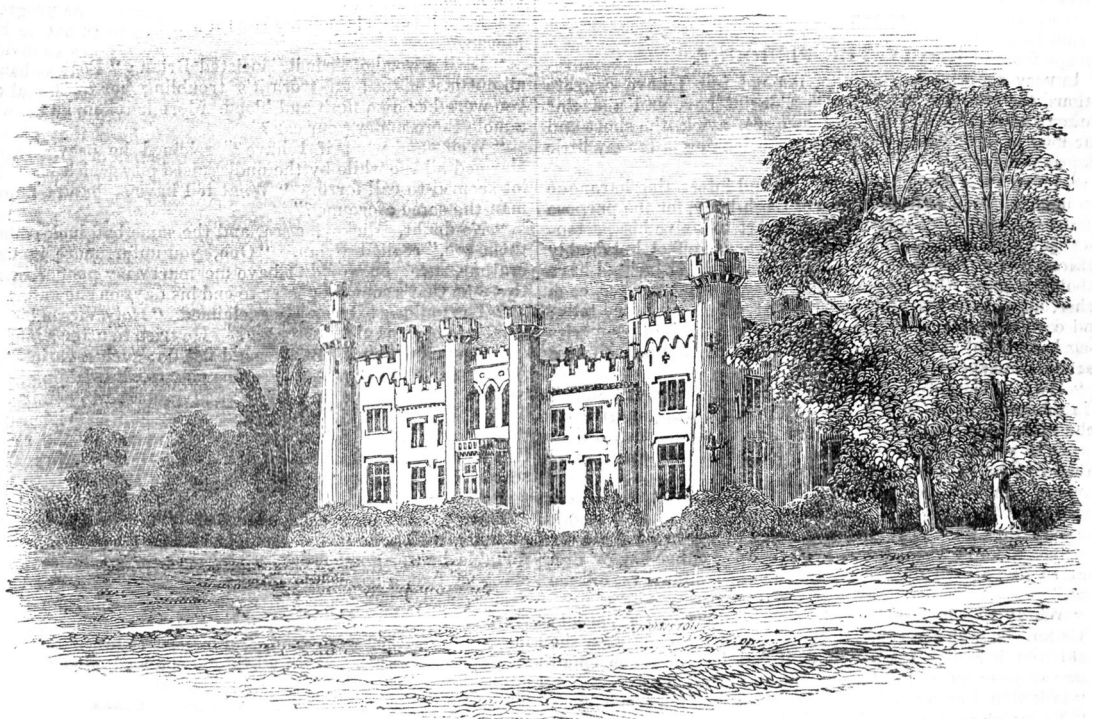
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WOODLANDS, COUNTY OF DUBLIN

WOODLANDS, the seat of one of our good resident landlords, Colonel White, considered in connection with its beautiful demesne, may justly rank as the finest aristocratic residence in the immediate vicinity of our metropolis. As an architectural composition, indeed, the house, or castle, as it is called, will not bear a comparison, either for its classical correctness of details, or its general picturesqueness of outline, with the Castle of Clontarf—the architectural gem of our vicinity; but its proportions are on a grander scale, and its general effect accordingly more imposing, while its demesne scenery, in its natural beauties, the richness of its plantations, and other artificial improvements, is without a rival in our metropolitan county, and indeed is characterised by some features of such exquisite beauty as are very rarely found in park scenery any where, and which are nowhere to be surpassed. Well might the Prince Pückler Muskan, who despite of his strange name has undoubtedly a true taste for the beautiful and picturesque, describe the entrance to this demesne as “indeed the most delightful in its kind that can be imagined.” “Scenery,” he continues, “by nature most beautiful, is improved by art to the highest degree of its capability, and, without destroying its free and wild character, a variety and richness of vegetation is produced which enchants the eye. Gay shrubs and wild flowers, the softest turf and giant trees, festooned with creeping plants, fill the narrow glen through which the path winds, by the side of the clear dancing brook, which, falling in little cataracts, flows on, sometimes hidden in the thicket, sometimes resting like liquid silver in an emerald cup, or rushing under overhanging arches of rock, which nature seems

to have hung there as triumphal gates for the beneficent Naiad of the valley to pass through.”

This description may appear somewhat enthusiastic, but we can truly state as our own opinion, formed on a recent visit to Woodlands, that it is by no means overdrawn, but, on the contrary, that it would be equally difficult, if not impossible, either for the pencil or the pen to convey an adequate idea of the peculiar beauties of this little tract of fairy land.

Singularly beautiful, however, as this sylvan glen unquestionably is, it is only one of the many features for which Woodlands is pre-eminently distinguished. Its finely undulating surface—its sheets of water, though artificially formed—its noble forest timber—but above all, its woodland walks, commanding vistas of the exquisite valley of the Liffey, with the more remote scenery bounded by the Dublin and Wicklow mountains—all are equally striking, and present a combination of varied and impressive features but rarely found within the bounds of even a princely demesne.

Though Woodlands derives very many of its attractions from modern improvements, its chief artificial features are of no recent creation, and are such as it would require a century or two to bring to their present perfection. Woodlands is emphatically an old place, and is said to have been granted by King John to Sir Geoffrey Lutterel, an Anglo-Norman knight who accompanied him into Ireland, and in possession of whose descendants it remained, and was their residence from the close of the fifteenth till the commencement of the present century, when it was sold to Mr Luke White by the last Earl of Carhampton. Up to this period it was known by

the name of Lutterelstown, a name which, for various reasons, the family into whose possession it has passed have wisely changed.

The principal parts of the mansion were rebuilt about fifty years back, but a portion of the original castle still remains, and an apartment in it bears the name of King John's chamber. It has also received additional extension from its present proprietor, who is now making further additions to the structure.

Woodlands is situated on the north bank of the Liffey, about five miles from Dublin. P.

PEGGY THE PISHOGUE.

"AND now, Mickey Brennan, it's not but I have a grate regard for you, for troth you're a dacint boy, and a dacint father and mother's child; but you see, avick, the short and the long of it is, that you needn't be looking after my little girl any more."

Such was the conclusion of a long and interesting harangue pronounced by old Brian Moran of Lagh-buoy, for the purpose of persuading his daughter's sweetheart to waive his pretensions—a piece of diplomacy never very easy to effect, but doubly difficult when the couple so unceremoniously separated have laboured under the delusion that they were born for each other, as was the case in the affair of which our story tells; and certainly, whatever Mr Michael Brennan's other merits may have been, he was very far from exhibiting himself as a pattern of patience on the occasion.

"Why, thin, Brian Moran!" he outrageously exclaimed, "in the name of all that's out of the way, will you give me one reason, good, bad, or indifferent, and I'll be satisfied?"

"Och, you unfortunate gosssoon, don't be afther axing me," responded Brian dolefully.

"Ah, thin, why wouldn't I?" replied the rejected lover. "Aren't we playing together since she could walk—wasn't she the light of my eyes and the pulse of my heart these six long years—and when did one of ye ever either say or sign that I was to give ever until this blessed minute?—tell me that."

"Widdy Eelish!" groaned the closely interrogated parent; "'tis true enough for you. Botheration to Peggy, I wish she tould you herself. I knew how it 'ud be; an' sure small blame to you; an' it'll kill Meny out an' out."

"Is it that I amnt rich enough?" he asked impetuously. "No, avick machree, it isn't; but, sure, can't you wait an' ax Peggy?"

"Is it because there's any thing against me?" continued he, without heeding this reference to the mother of his fair one—"Is it because there's any thing against me, I say, now or evermore, in the shape of warrant, or summons, or bad word, or any thing of the kind?"

"Och, *forrear, forrear!*" answered poor Brian, "but can't you ax Peggy?" and he clasped his hands again and again with bitterness, for the young man's interest had been, from long and constant habit, so interwoven in his mind with those of his darling Meny, that he was utterly unable to check the burst of agony which the question had excited. The old man's evident grief and evasion of the question were not lost upon his companion.

"I'm belied—I know I am—I have it all now," shouted he, utterly losing all command of himself. "Come, Brian Moran, this is no child's play—tell me at once who dared to spake one word against me, an' if I don't drive the lie down his throat, be it man, woman, or child, I'm willing to lose her and every thing else I care for!"

"No, then," answered Brian, "the never a one said a word against you—you never left it in their power, avick; an' that's what's breaking my heart. Millia murther, it's all Peggy's own doings."

"What!" he replied—"I'll be bound Peggy had a bad dhrame about the match. Arrah, out with it, an' let us hear what Peggy the Pishogue has to say for herself—out with it, man! I'm as thray for something to laugh at."

"Oh, whisht, whisht—don't talk that way of Peggy any how," exclaimed Brian, offended by this imputation on the unerring wisdom of his helpmate. "Whatever she says, doesn't it come to pass? Didn't it rain on Saturday last, fine as the day looked? Didn't Tim Higgins's cow die? Wasn't Judy Carney married to Tom Knox afther all? Ay, an' as sure as your name is Mickey Brennan, what she says will

come true of yourself too. *Forrear, forrear!* that the like should befall one of your dacint kin!"

"Why, what's going to happen me?" inquired he, his voice trembling a little in spite of all his assumed carelessness: for contemptuously as he had alluded to the wisdom of his intended mother-in-law, it stood in too high repute not to create in him some dismay at the probability of his figuring unfavourably in any of her prognostications.

"Don't ax me, don't ax me," was the sorrowing answer; "but take your baste out of the stable at once, and go straight to Father Coffey; and who knows but he might put you on some way to escape the bad luck that's afore you."

"Psha! fudge! 'pon my sowl it's a shame for you, Brian Moran."

"Divil a word of lie in it," insisted Brian; "Peggy found it all out last night; an' troth it's troubling her as much as if you were her own flesh and blood. More betoken, haven't you a mole there under your ear?"

"Well, and what if I have?" rejoined he peevishly, but alarmed all the while by the undisguised pity which his future lot seemed to call forth. "What if I have?—hadn't many a man the same afore me?"

"No doubt, Mickey, agra, and the same bad luck came to them too," replied Brian. "Och, you unfortunate ignorant crathur, sure you wouldn't have me marry my poor little girl to a man that's sooner or later to end his days on the gallows!"

"The gallows!" he slowly exclaimed. "Holy Virgin! is that what's to become of me after all?" He tried to utter a laugh of derision and defiance, but it would not do; such a vaticination from such a quarter was no laughing matter. So yielding at last to the terror which he had so vainly affected to combat, he buried his face in his hands, and threw himself violently on the ground; while Brian, scarcely less moved by the revelation he had made on the faith of his wife's far-famed sagacity, seated himself compassionately beside him to administer what consolation he could.

Mickey Brennan, in the parlance of our country, was a snug gosssoon, well to do in the world, had a nice bit of land, a comfortable house, good crops, a pig or two, a cow or two, a sheep or two, a handsome good-humoured face, a good character; and, what made him more marriageable than all the rest, he had the aforementioned goods all to himself, for his father and mother were dead, and his last sister had got married at Shrove-tide. With all these combined advantages he might have selected any girl in the parish; but his choice was made long years before: it was Meny Moran or nobody—a choice in which Meny Moran herself perfectly concurred, and which her father, good, easy, soft-hearted Brian, never thought of disputing, although he was able to give her a fortune probably amounting to double what her suitor was worth. But was the fair one's mother ever satisfied when such a disparity existed? Careful creatures! pound for pound is the maternal maxim in all ages and countries, and to give Peggy Moran her due, she was as much influenced by it as her betters, and murmured loud and long at the acquiescence of her husband in such a sacrifice. She murmured in vain, however: much as Brian deferred to her judgment and advice in all other matters, his love for his fond and pretty Meny armed him with resolution in this. When she wept at her mother's insinuations, he always found a word of comfort for her; and if words wouldn't do, he managed to bring Mickey and her together, and left them to settle the matter after their own way—a method which seldom failed of success. But Peggy was not to be balked of her will. What! she whose mere word could make or break any match for five miles round, to be forbidden all interference in her own daughter's: it was not to be borne. So at last she applied herself in downright earnest to the task. She dreamed at the match, tossed cups at it, saw signs at it: in fine, called her whole armoury of necromancy into requisition, and was rewarded at last by the discovery that the too highly-favoured swain was inevitably destined to end his days on the gallows—a discovery which, as has been already seen, fulfilled her most sanguine wishes.

Whatever may be the opinion of other and wiser people on the subject, in the parish of Ballycoursey or its vicinity it was rather an ugly joke to be thus devoted to the infernal gods by a prophetess of such unerring sagacity as Peggy Moran, or, as she was sometimes styled with reference to her skill in all supernatural matters, Peggy the Pishogue—that cognomen implying an acquaintance with more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in philosophy; and most unquestionably it was no misthomer: the priest himself was not more